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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
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                    FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
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     UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
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                    Plaintiff,
                                       ) No. 05-60008-2-HO
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                                        ) January 19, 2010
       v.
     PIROUZ SEDAGHATY, et al.,
6
                                       ) Eugene, Oregon
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                     Defendants.
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                    TRANSCRIPT OF ORAL ARGUMENT
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              BEFORE THE HONORABLE MICHAEL R. HOGAN
                UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT JUDGE
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                     Deborah Wilhelm, CSR, RPR
                          Court Reporter
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(Tuesday, January 19, 2010; 11:22 a.m.)
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                      PROCEEDINGS
             THE CLERK: This is the time set for Criminal
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    05-60008-2, United States of America versus Pirouz
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    Sedaghaty, hearing on defendant's motion to compel the
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    government to utilize the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty
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    on behalf of Mr. Sedaghaty and/or to issue letters
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    rogatory.
             THE COURT: Give me just a second, Counsel.
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    Counsel, I am familiar with your papers. This morning,
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    I also received another motion to compel the government
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    to utilize the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty on behalf
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    of the defendant concerning Saudi Arabia. And so I
    think I'd like to -- if you comments, I'd rather have
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    comments on both of them today. There is similar
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    issues. And if there is a difference, talk about that
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    for me, please. If you have something more to say on
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    this, fine.
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             MR. WAX: We were surprised, Your Honor, to see
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    the government arguing that what we're seeking is not
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    exculpatory.
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             What we need from Saudi Arabia and Egypt goes
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    directly to the very core of this case.
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             THE COURT: Let me ask with regard to Egypt,
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    Mr. El-Fiki --
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MR. WAX: Yes.

THE COURT: -- what defense would his statement make -- let's say he -- say I gave the money, the term I'd probably use is God, I gave the money for charity purposes, and what defense does that make to the elements of the crimes charged here, the tax charge and the money charge?

MR. WAX: We anticipate that the government will be arguing that the fact that Mr. El-Fiki wired money to Ashland, Oregon, from an account in London, when he is based in Egypt, is suspicious and part of the overall plan of al-Haramain, whether al-Haramain Ashland or al-Haramain Saudi, to do something inappropriate with the money.

We just received this morning a report from the person the government calls an expert, Evan Kohlmann, and while I did not have time to digest it, what he has written about with respect to the way in which al-Haramain conducted its business, and this is primarily al-Haramain Saudi, suggests to me even more clearly than it did when we filed the pleading that the way in which the money was routed will be a part of the government's case with respect to the element of willfulness.

Mr. El-Fiki's statement, as reflected in the

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    FBI 302 report that was provided to us, explains that
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    there was nothing inappropriate, nefarious,
    conspiratorial, or anything bad in any way about the
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    fact that he sent the money here. And it explains what
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    the -- I'll call it advertisement, solicitation, you
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    know, for donations was what it said, and the choice
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    that it gave to donors to send money either to the U.S.
    or to Saudi.
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             THE COURT: What information do you have that
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    makes you believe that Mr. El-Fiki would be a witness,
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    that he would testify?
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             MR. WAX: He provided a full and detailed
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    statement to the Egyptian authorities at the request of
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    the United States government that was participated in by
    the United States government, we're confident, in
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    multiple ways. We know that they were permitted to
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    listen to and view the interrogation. We're confident
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    that they communicated with the Egyptian authority,
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    Secret Police, whoever it was who actually conducted the
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    interview in terms of explaining the area that they
    wanted covered.
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THE COURT: What do I do with the language in a case like Westerdahl that appears to limit relief like this to a case in which there is prosecutorial misconduct?

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MR. WAX: Well, I don't believe, Your Honor, that that is what Westerdahl says, nor any of the other cases. My reading of Westerdahl from the outset and -
THE COURT: It uses the words "where the fact-finding process is intentionally distorted by prosecutorial misconduct, and the defendant is thereby denied a fair trial."

MR. WAX: Well, there are other portions in the opinion, Your Honor, which do not require a finding of misconduct.

What I believe the Ninth Circuit said there and in the subsequent cases is that when the government uses its processes for the gathering of information on its behalf, and refuses to do so for the defendant, that is the intentional distortion of the fact-finding process that the Ninth Circuit discussed. Nothing more than that need be shown.

We don't need to show any bad faith on the part of the government. We don't need to show anything other than they have this authority, the executive authority to grant immunity in Westerdahl, the executive authority to use the MLAT process in a case of this nature.

When they use it on their own behalf, when they are requested to use on it on behalf of the defense, with the type of showing that was made in Westerdahl and

the type of showing that's made here of the relevance and exculpatory nature of the evidence, and they refuse, that's enough. Westerdahl says -- and the cases that have followed it -- say that's enough. They may not do that.

And if they refuse, then the court can either preclude the testimony that they have obtained or dismiss the case. We don't need to show anything more, as I read those cases.

THE COURT: The cases also talk about timing, and we've got a June trial date. This case is over four years old. Why does this come now?

MR. WAX: Well, Your Honor, as we explained earlier on in the case, we made significant efforts to locate Mr. El-Fiki, we were unsuccessful. It took us quite a while to finally get in contact with him and to make the effort to speak with him. That process was finished -- I don't recall the exact date, perhaps several months before we filed the pleading. We exhausted our efforts to obtain this information on our own.

With respect to the information that we're seeking in Saudi Arabia, as the court is aware, we have been going through -- I don't recall -- 40,000 -- I mean, many, many, many tens of thousands of e-mails,

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once we eventually received the discovery and were able to convert it into a usable format, and then spend the time going through and finding the relevant documents.

THE COURT: But El-Fiki's name is not a new

MR. WAX: No. With respect to El-Fiki, we made efforts which took us quite a while to try to obtain the information on our own. I don't believe that we were late in any way. And with respect to the use of this MLAT process, our understanding is that goes far more rapidly than the letter rogatory process. And it seems to us that with respect --

THE COURT: And what do I do with the language that says under these treatises that's for the signatory's use, not to be used in this situation? I don't know that it has the negative, but it's for the signatory's use. The cases talk about that, at least.

MR. WAX: Yes, Your Honor. And what we're requesting is your directing the government to utilize the process on behalf of the defense.

We find it very disturbing that the government did not even respond to the information that we first provided to them informally when we sought their assistance on an informal basis before we filed this pleading. We were told by the government prosecutors in

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this case that they could not, under any circumstances, utilize the MLAT process on our behalf.

We obtained information, which we attached to our pleading as an exhibit, that that is just simply not the case. We provided to the court and to the government a pleading in which the government prosecutors did what is not being done in this case and that is agree, under the direction of the court as reflected in the pleadings in that case, to utilize the MLAT process through what was called the walled off investigators and prosecutors.

That's what we're asking the court to direct the government to do here. And if it refuses to do so, then under Westerdahl, this court has the authority to either refuse to permit the government to introduce the evidence it has obtained through the MLAT and rogatory process, or the next step is to dismiss the indictment.

So the cases which say that the MLAT is not available to the defense, we're not challenging those. But what we're pointing out is that in none of those cases was the court presented with the argument that we presented here based on the Ninth Circuit's holdings in Westerdahl and the cases that have followed it in the intervening 20 years.

Under the Westerdahl analysis, we don't utilize

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    the MLAT process ourselves. The government does it for
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         The government designates an investigator outside
    of the prosecution team, the government designates a
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    prosecutor outside of the prosecutor team. Those
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    investigators and prosecutors are walled off from the
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    process --
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             THE COURT: I understand the process.
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             MR. WAX: Okay. That's what we're requesting.
    That's what Westerdahl says is required when you have
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    the purely executive decision for immunity, which we see
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    as parallel and indistinguishable from the purely
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    executive authority here under the MLAT.
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             They've obtained information. They are not
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    cooperating. We say direct them to, or preclude their
    use of the evidence.
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             THE COURT: Mr. Cardani, what about this
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    argument that this is exculpatory on the willfulness
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    element?
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             MR. CARDANI: Does the court wish to hear a
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    little bit about -- any responses to counsel's comments
    about use in other cases?
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             THE COURT: I'm going to let you both exhaust
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    yourself. But I'm just trying to get to my question,
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    but if you have something more, that's fine.
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             MR. CARDANI: Okay. Well, I'll go right to the
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court's question then.

Regarding the exculpatory nature of

Mr. El-Fiki's conduct, it's true that his conduct is the

central aspect of the -- forms one of the building

blocks of the indictment. It is his money that we're

talking about in the indictment, that is true. So his

conduct, his statements, are certainly relevant from an

evidentiary standpoint. And if he were an American

citizen or if he were here, he'd probably end up on both

of our witness lists. But that's a different analysis

from do we need to use extraordinary powers of the court

to secure testimony because it's exculpatory?

And the -- our response talks about it's one thing to say that Mr. El-Fiki had no intent to fund fighters, mujahideen, with his donation. But it's also clear from that statement that he's never met our defendant, Mr. Sedaghaty, nor has he met the co-defendant, Mr. Al-Buthe, nor have there been any conversations or communications that we're aware of between them.

So it's one thing to say Mr. El-Fiki had a certain intent, but that intent is not exculpatory vis-à-vis this defendant. And, of course, Mr. El-Fiki could never comment on this defendant's intent and knowledge, prohibited by the rules of evidence.

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             So that's the point we made in our response
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    that it's certainly relevant but it doesn't rise to the
    level of being exculpatory in our view.
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             THE COURT: All right. And is the question
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    closer with Mr. Al-Sanad from Saudi Arabia?
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             MR. CARDANI: Yes.
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             THE COURT: All right. Is there more you would
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    like to say about that?
             MR. CARDANI: About Mr. Sanad?
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             THE COURT: Yes.
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             MR. CARDANI: Well, the first thing I'd like to
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    say about that request is we got it Friday afternoon and
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    we have not --
             THE COURT: I just got it this morning. So if
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    you want more time to respond, that's fine.
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             MR. CARDANI: We do want more time to respond.
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    But --
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             THE COURT: Then don't bother with it.
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    you respond, I will also want to know whether or not
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    they really need certified copies of these documents
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    that apparently you both have.
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             MR. CARDANI: Well, I'd like to give the court
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    a preview of where I think we're going on a response to
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    this because --
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             THE COURT: All right.
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MR. CARDANI: -- half of it I've got off the top of my head. Mr. Wax spends a great period of time asking the court to order us to use the MLAT that we have with Saudi Arabia to get all this evidence and secure things.

The fact of the matter is we do not have an MLAT with Saudi Arabia. There is none. So most of this motion is mooted by the fact that we have not negotiated a treaty with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to get this.

We do -- we'd have to default then to -- any kind of evidence gathering process involved, the court would have to default to rogatories. And that's where I think we need to have some discussion.

But I will say that we have used our own processes internally to try to get background information relating to these receipts that are appended. These are not new to us. They're not new to the defense. Everybody has known about them for quite some time. We tried to track these things down and get certified copies and to find out some of the background behind them, and we have been unable to get anywhere in Saudi Arabia ourselves. So if the court ultimately decides -- we'll answer this: If the court decides to consider rogatory, we should be under no false sense of illusion that we're going to get anything from Saudi

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    Arabia, certainly not timely or at all in terms of that.
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             THE COURT: It's up to them how they treat
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    that --
             MR. CARDANT: Yes.
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             THE COURT: -- then?
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             MR. CARDANI: Yes. It's a discretionary
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    procedure. Rogatories, of course, go from the court
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    through our State Department to a judge in Saudi Arabia.
             THE COURT: Yes.
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             MR. CARDANI: And we just kind of facilitate
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    that request. But it is a discretionary request by
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    people in Saudi Arabia.
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             I don't know how the court wishes to go here,
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    but the Westerdahl argument --
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             THE COURT: Well, I -- I think maybe I'll step
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    back now. I tried to get to the points that are -- I
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    want to make sure I'm listening and not thinking about
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    the issues that I came up with when I was studying this
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    yesterday. But, Mr. Wax, did you have more you wanted
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    to say about the initial motions, the ones on the
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    calendar today?
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             MR. WAX: No, Your Honor, I think I've covered
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    it.
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             THE COURT: Thank you.
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             MR. CARDANI: The Westerdahl argument, Judge,
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to us it's more like apples and oranges. In Westerdahl you're talking about immunity. And that case, which is a fairly extraordinary case, and has not been implemented to any degree or frequency, fortunately, because it requires what the court just pointed out, a showing of, in essence, misconduct by the prosecution in implementing immunity to certain witnesses that say a certain set of facts but refusing to offer immunity when there may be another set of facts that may be directly exculpatory. And that is seen as abusive, unfair, due process issues, constitutional issues. And in that limited circumstance, there may be -- it may be necessary for a hearing to determine if the government has committed misconduct. A far cry from what we have here. We're not talking about immunity. We're talking about evidence gathering. We have got nothing from our MLAT with Egypt.

We have got nothing from our MLAT with Egypt.

So it's not like we even used our processes available to get one side of the picture from Egypt through an MLAT and there may be this whole other pile of information that's exculpatory. We haven't implemented that procedure with respect to our Egyptian Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

But more fundamentally, I'm not going to repeat everything in the brief, but this is an executive branch

tool. The court cases that are cited, especially the cases out of the Eastern District of Virginia, are very instructive, they're recent. Judge Ellis and other judges on that bench have an extensive background in this. And they've issued opinions that are reported in the Federal Supplement. And I'm not aware of any case where the judge has ordered the government to use its MLAT authority to get information. And the courts are very hesitant to do so, recognizing that the terms of the MLATs are negotiated between the governments, do not involve the courts, and it's an executive dialogue.

And the language in the MLAT at issue here, Egypt, specifically prohibit it being used as an evidence gathering device for private parties like the defendant here. The *Jefferson* and *Rosen* cases are the ones that are very good in providing the background on that.

Now, with respect to what Mr. Wax says about the government does this anyways, we checked into the facts of the Ohio case, which *El Hindi*, I think, is the case, and he attached a letter where there was some indication that the government was going to use its MLAT authority for the defense. I don't have chapter and verse, but I talked to the people that were somewhat involved in this back in Washington.

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The government's office that deals with interfacing between foreign governments and our government and the State Department is under the Department of Justice called Office of International Affairs, OIA. And they break down to particular regions. And I spoke with the people that deal with this part of the world. They are very aware of this. And what they said in that case, El Hindi, is that although this paperwork was executed by the U.S. Attorney's Office and components of the department, no one ever consulted the central authority, OIA, about this. Once they heard about this, they vetoed it. They said this is not what is done. It is outside of protocol and it never happened. If the court wishes a statement or testimony to support that, we would be happy to provide it but it was never done. And it shouldn't be done here. The other comments I have are with respect to the alternative request and that's for the letters rogatory. Can I address that now? THE COURT: Yes. MR. CARDANI: On the letters rogatory, as I read it, they want the court to issue letters rogatory to Egypt to get the Egyptian courts to help secure the presence of witnesses here. These are not American

citizens. These are Egyptian citizens, outside the compulsory process of the United States government and this court. So it would require some direct involvement by the Egyptian courts. And from what I read, they have been unable to gain the cooperation of Mr. El-Fiki.

There is no indication that he would voluntarily jump on a plane, come here, and testify. So that's kind of a huge issue in terms of just issuing letters of rogatory asking Egypt to help secure that.

He also -- the defendant also asked for letter rogatory assistance to do a Rule 15 deposition in Egypt, I presume of Mr. El-Fiki and the other two. The same cases I cited earlier, the *Jefferson* case out of the Eastern District of Virginia, very instructive. After acknowledging that MLATs are not appropriate tools for the defense discovery, did indicate that letters rogatory can be helpful to secure witness testimony, but only where it is shown that the witness will agree to testify at a foreign deposition and provide material information.

In that case, the judge did not issue a full-blown letter of rogatory but did issue a letter rogatory to the foreign government essentially asking would these people testify at a deposition willingly.

And I think that if that's done here, foreign law needs

to be considered. I don't know what Egyptian law provides someone in Mr. El-Fiki or the other two's situation, what type of rights they have under Egyptian law, but that would have to be delved into, I think. But the judge in that case, Jefferson, did issue a limited rogatory with a 60-day status check, not asking the court to secure the depositions but, in essence, asking whether they'd be willing to testify at a foreign deposition.

One big thing that we're very concerned about that has been touched upon by the court and that's the timing of all of this. And on the Egyptian side of the house, this all involves testimony involving Mr. El-Fiki and records concerning his transaction. We issued a subpoena to al-Haramain in the summer of 2003.

Mr. Matasar was counsel at the time, and he responded by giving us records roughly in the fall of 2003, which included some of this very material, the El-Fiki material, the transactional information, perhaps some of the e-mails that they're pulling out of the computers now. Some of those came over in hard copy to us from them way back in 2003. It's no mystery what this case is all about and who Mr. El-Fiki is.

Moving forward, once Mr. Sedaghaty was indicted and eventually came back to the United States in 2007,

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the very first batch of discovery we provided in December of 2007 included all of the -- the relevant El-Fiki material, and also these computer hard drives were turned over. So for two years now -- for more than two years, but through discovery purposes for over two years, this material has sat in the defendant's possession. It is only now, two years later, that we're getting these requests to go talk to El-Fiki, or to the MLAT authority, or to get records certified, it's very late in the game. And the court knows that we've gone to great lengths to secure a June 2010 trial date. court took two weeks on its calendar, set a series of preceding motions, a number of dominos have to fall, a lot of hearings, a lot of witnesses to come here, that's all been set up, and we're in that process now of heading towards trial. And so our comment is if the court wants to consider some type of letter rogatory to try to get this

And so our comment is if the court wants to consider some type of letter rogatory to try to get this thing going, I would ask that the court be mindful of the trial date and not let any kind of delay in the rogatory process act as an impediment to moving towards trial.

Judge Ellis recognized this in the Jefferson case that the trial was, I think, fairly imminent. And the judge, as I said, said I'll issue a letter rogatory,

we'll have a status check in 60 days, but we're not going to let this extend the trial. And if there is no response to it from the country requested, then we're going to deny the request for a Rule 15 deposition and move forward to trial.

Department -- even a letter of rogatory is a very cumbersome process. The courts have described this process as extremely cumbersome, dilatory, expensive.

And the State Department, who does coordinate with the foreign governments, we've asked them about Egypt's track record. Because it is a discretionary vehicle, either through an MLAT or through a letter rogatory, and I quoted a State Department comment that came back to me for purposes of this hearing: The United States has enjoyed limited success in obtaining admissible evidence in a timely manner from Egypt. The U.S. government has made few requests which are generally grounded on the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, successes have been infrequent.

So, again, no illusions here, if we go down the road of foreign evidence gathering, we know from our own work, and this is law enforcement to law enforcement, that it is extremely difficult to work with foreign governments to get cooperation. We have to deal with

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    the logistics of translation, and then there has to be a
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    formal handoff from the State Department to the
    equivalent of their State Department, going down to
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    their ministry of whatever department is involved in the
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    request, to their courts, consideration made, and then
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    back around. So it's going to take an awful long time,
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    time that we really don't have right now if we want to
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    preserve this June trial date, which we want to do at
    all costs. I think that's all I have.
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             THE COURT: Thank you. Mr. Wax.
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             MR. WAX: One second, please.
             (Discussion held off the record between
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    co-counsel.)
             MR. WAX: Your Honor, to the extent that the
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    timing of our request is an issue for you, there are a
    few additional comments that I would make. If the
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    timing is not an issue for you, then I don't have
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    anything to add.
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             THE COURT: I do think it's something I need to
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    consider.
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             MR. WAX: All right. Then let me say the
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    following: You are aware that from the outset of the
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    commencement of the case in this court back in 2007,
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    late 2007, there has been an ongoing dispute about the
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    manner in which the government has handled the computer
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discovery. We have been through that. It's on the record. But I think that that is critical to understand how long it took us to get into a position to understand what was relevant in terms of some of the financial documents, what we could attack in terms of some of the financial documents, and what we wanted to embrace in terms of some of these financial documents.

Before we could understand that aspect of the case, it was our judgment that it would have been incompetent as defense counsel, it would also have been imprudent of me as the person responsible for money, to send investigators off to Egypt and to Saudi Arabia to try to gather information from Mr. El-Fiki and some of these records that are in the motion that we filed on Friday. You just can't do that. We couldn't do it without understanding the case.

And we did not get to the point where we could understand the case until the summer of 2009 because of the exceedingly difficult problem we had in getting to the electronic data.

THE COURT: Have you had someone in Egypt?

MR. WAX: Mr. Teesdale has been there, and

Mr. Teesdale has made the effort to contact Mr. El-Fiki

and this pleading is a result of his efforts and his

inability to obtain what we believe we need and what the

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government was able to obtain through whatever contacts it has with the Egypt Secret Police and the Egyptian government that conducted the interrogation or interview of Mr. El-Fiki at the behest of the United States government.

In terms of timing, the government has certainly provided us with a lot of material, but as you also recall, they announced at the outset that this is not an open discovery case. We received another batch of discovery this morning. And we're appreciative of that.

As I mentioned, my quick review of the report from Evan Kohlmann, the person they call an expert that's in here, that says things that heighten the relevance and exculpatory aspect of the information we're seeking.

This material also includes a document called al-Haramain Islamic Foundation audit trail. And the date on it is May 1, 2008. We're concerned if this date, May 1, 2008, is something that was in the government's possession now for roughly 20 months, why we're just getting it today. Among other things, it contains information that directly contradicts some of the written statements that we were previously provided from the accountant Tom Wilcox about the core aspect of

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this case as it relates to the purchase of a property in Springfield and accounting. May 1, 2008. If Mr. Wilcox printed it out and prepared it then, and the government didn't have it, well, it's hard to understand that. the government printed out that and they are just giving it to us now, with the exculpatory information in it, it seems to me that the government is not in a particularly good position to be complaining about any delay on our part as we have been trying to understand and to access and then to understand what is in the voluminous electronic records that are on the hard drives that were recovered. THE COURT: Have you had that discussion with Mr. Cardani? MR. WAX: No, I just looked at this -- I mean, we were given it just before the court proceeding began. We were looking at it for a moment outside at the table, and I was just going back through it here in the courtroom. THE COURT: All right. Anything further? MR. CARDANI: Those came out of al-Haramain hard drives, which were given to them a long time ago. We can have discussions outside the court about the dates and the ins and outs of it, but that's been in their possession, at least in hard drive form, for quite

1 some time. 2 THE COURT: All right. I'll give you something in writing, gentlemen. Thank you. 3 MR. CARDANI: Oh, Judge, one other matter. Did 4 the court wish to address the need for a classified 5 hearing at the March -- our next hearing, and this is in 6 7 March, and it's to address some of the legal issues on 8 the motion to suppress? THE COURT: I have your written material. 9 10 think that's satisfactory. I'm frankly waiting to hear with more specificity exactly what we're going to be 11 12 talking about then, what material we're going to see. 13 MR. CARDANI: All right. In coming into that 14 hearing, we're not anticipating the need for any kind of classified evidence unless the court orders otherwise, 15 16 and that would require logistical support from the court 17 security officer. THE COURT: Well, now, as you all know, this 18 19 case has gone on long enough we lost our wonderful court 20 security officer, and I've got to meet a new person. I 21 quess she's -- Erin has already transferred to her job 22 in San Francisco. And so what I'm going to do is 23 request, when it's on the schedule, that we get the new 24 one out so that we can get a -- some working 25 relationship there. All right. Thank you very much.

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             MR. CARDANI: Thank you, Judge.
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             THE CLERK: Court is in recess.
3
             MR. MATASAR: Your Honor, can I just ask, when
4
    you said you were waiting for some more information, do
    you want us to make a further submission of the
5
6
    specific --
7
             THE COURT: Something informal to tell me
    specifically where you are going. You've given me
8
    principles -- legal principles and so on. It's sort of
9
10
    hard to apply those in the ether sphere.
11
             MR. MATASAR:
                           That's fine, Your Honor.
12
    might -- when you said the court security officer is
13
    coming, would that be just a meeting with the court
14
    or --
15
             THE COURT: Yes.
             MR. MATASAR: You wouldn't want us to do it
16
17
    then, you'd want us to do it separately?
18
             THE COURT: I might make that in conjunction.
19
             MR. MATASAR:
                           Thank you.
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             (The proceedings were concluded at 12:01 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

I, Deborah Wilhelm, Certified Shorthand Reporter for the State of Oregon, do hereby certify that I was present at and reported in machine shorthand the oral proceedings had in the above-entitled matter. I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript, to the best of my skill and ability, dated this 8th day of February, 2010.

/s/ Deborah Wilhelm Deborah Wilhelm, RPR

Certified Shorthand Reporter

Certificate No. 00-0363